1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

462 horde gathering and is intensified by it. The women gather small ani-
222 mals and all vegetable food, and the men fish and kill larger animals, although a man might gather yams or lily bulbs for himself if he were hungry. The women of the various clans of allied groups often go on foraging expeditions together.

2. *Gathering and Preparation of Food—Sexual Division of Labor*

462 The women furnish the bulk of the daily food. The men's contribution of meat, although much more prized, is less certain. When
● 261 kangaroos, wallabies, or emus are speared, turtles, dugong or porpoises
224 harpooned, the whole group gorges itself after the meat has been divided properly and cooked in stone fires and ovens. The women are supposed to supply the food for the men while they perform the sacred rituals; although the men may hunt, fish, or go harpooning for sea animals at this time, they do it casually and not as part of their daily routine.

224 In the usual method of hunting kangaroos, a man or several men cover themselves with mud to prevent the kangaroo from seeing and smelling them and wait at a narrow part of the mangrove jungle. A group of young boys, sent to the other end of the jungle, spread out in a long line and start moving toward the men. They bark in a very high tone in imitation of the dingo. The boys progress fairly slowly in order not to frighten the kangaroos into too rapid motion. When the kangaroos get within throwing distance the men attempt to hit them with their stone spears. Kangaroos are also stalked; success here is possible because the animal usually sleeps in the daytime and can easily be approached to within accurate throwing distance.[2]

252 After an opossum has been treed and captured, it is hit on the head and the entrails are removed immediately. The intestinal fat is pulled off and cooked where the animal is captured. The intestines are carefully cleaned and opened and the gut is wrapped around the handle of a spear-thrower. When the opossum is to be cooked, all the openings of the carcass are closed, the hair is singed off, and the carcass put in the ashes and covered over with leaves and ashes. It is not cooked with a stone fire, as are larger animals, such as turtle, emu, kangaroo,

[151] [2] The Murngin are expert in identifying footprints. A little girl eight or nine years old can immediately tell one who made a particular footprint even though there are a hundred or more people who have placed their imprints on the earth about it. This is true even though the member is not present and the print has been made sometime in the past. Small female children of this age would be the poorest of any of the Murngin at identifying footprints.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

ground and cultivating and planting crops. Payment in the form of flour and tobacco was made for all work done, and the principle of 'no work—no pay' was strictly adhered to. Agriculture was an economic necessity in assisting them to develop from a nomadic existence to a communal life. Pay was later in the form of food grown on the station; in this way they became self-supporting, and profits were automatically returned to them.

When the time came for planting it seemed ridiculous to the nomad to bury good sweet-potatoes instead of eating them, for the relationship between seed and harvest had not occurred to them. About three months later, when the first crops were still immature I was surprised one morning to find that they had been scratched out and eaten. Two months of hard clearing and three months of cultivating had gone overnight. Disappointing as it was, the people could hardly be blamed, for it was against all their experience to leave good food to mature. For centuries, stray coconuts had drifted from the East Indies to the shores of Arnhem Land, but none took root, for this unexpected harvest from the sea was eagerly seized and eaten. Nomads consume all edible food at hand, and in bush life rarely wait for yams, fruit, and berries to ripen. Food is scarce, and they instinctively make the most of anything they find. I have seen them bring loads of popular cashew nuts into camp, stripping the trees and smashing their wide shady branches in an effort to get the last of the crop, and then gorge the nuts through day and night till all have been eaten. On rare occasions a number of turtle are caught, and though some could be kept alive and eaten later, they are killed at once, and the camp feasts and sleeps intermittently till the catch is finished.

We tried to explain that cows and goats were kept for their milk and not for meat, but nomads found it hard to sit and tend them day by day and yard them at night, when each